

VA Stars & Stripes Healthcare Network

Significant Accomplishments – FY 2005

Last year was filled with outstanding achievements at our ten VA medical centers.

The accomplishments listed in this publication reflect this. For more information about these and other VAMC accomplishments, please contact any of the public affairs officers shown at the end of this publication. You can also learn more about our network and facilities by visiting our Web site, www.starsandstripes.med.va.gov

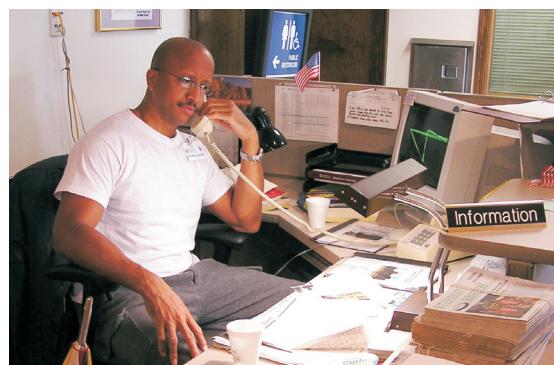
James E. Van Zandt VA Medical Center (Altoona, PA)

In the midst of national increases in pharmaceutical expenses, the James E. Van Zandt VAMC saved \$1.4 million in pharmacy costs. Savings were realized through using low-cost alternatives to high-cost medications whenever medically appropriate. To determine medical appropriateness, VAMC providers reviewed evidence-based clinical guidelines and dispensed medications that were consistent with delivering a high level of patient care.



Butler (PA) VA Medical Center

In an effort to expand available services to veterans, the Butler VAMC opened a 10-bed Compensated Work Therapy Transitional Residence (CWT/TR) for veterans enrolled in the CWT program. The CWT/TR provides veterans with extended residential treatment. The program utilizes a community-based living environment, work-based rehabilitation, and a therapeutic community built on peer and professional support. Independent living in the community and competitive employment are the optimal program outcomes for the veteran.



Louis A. Johnson VA Medical Center (Clarksburg, WV)

The Diabetes Self-Management Education Program at the Louis A. Johnson VAMC in Clarksburg, West Virginia, received certification from the American Diabetes Association for the tenth straight year. The program has been recognized locally and nationally as consistently providing a high standard of care and positive outcomes in the treatment of diabetes. A dedicated team of two RNs and volunteers support the program, with more than 1,200 veterans participating each year.



Coatesville (PA) VA Medical Center

Coatesville VAMC proudly opened a 30-bed transitional housing program for homeless female veterans. The Mary E. Walker House provides a safe, comfortable, and secure life setting which fosters respect, responsibility, and recovery. The Walker House staff supports the female veteran's efforts by creating an environment that provides empowerment, connection to others, and attainment of healthy coping skills. Completion of the program will assist female veterans with the skills needed for successful re-entry into the community.



Erie (PA) VA Medical Center

Erie VAMC had the privilege of working with veterans' organizations and community members in Warren and Venango Counties to bring VA health care services closer to local veterans. The Warren County VA Clinic opened in March 2005, while the Venango County VA Clinic (operated jointly with the Butler VAMC) opened in April 2005. Both clinics provide primary health care to area veterans and have been extremely successful.



Lebanon (PA) VA Medical Center

A national survey of veterans is conducted four times a year asking patients about the services they receive from VA. Survey results for the 4th quarter of FY 2005 rated Lebanon as the #1 VA medical center in the country for *Access to Care and Overall Coordination of Care* and second best in *Courtesy, Visit Coordination, and Education & Information*.



Philadelphia (PA) VA Medical Center

A Care Coordination/Home Telehealth Program in the areas of congestive heart failure and diabetes was successfully implemented at the Philadelphia VAMC during FY 2005. The program involves home telehealth technologies and is focused on supporting the care of veterans in the home. The staff includes two, full-time RN Care Coordinators and a program assistant.



VA Pittsburgh (PA) Healthcare System

The VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System (VAPHS) Cardiac Surgery Program is on the forefront of innovation, providing surgical therapies for veterans. These include cutting-edge, minimally invasive surgical options and DaVinci robotic procedures. More than 20 robotic-assisted coronary artery bypass grafts were performed at VAPHS in 2005. In November 2005, the first robotic-assisted mitral valve repair was performed at VAPHS, one of only 12 centers in the U.S. offering such a procedure. VAPHS performed two procedures, of which only about twenty had been performed in the country.



Wilkes-Barre (PA) VA Medical Center

Wilkes-Barre VAMC made positive strides in the Advanced Clinic Access initiative as the performance measures related to average clinic waiting times were met and/or exceeded for 15 out of 16 measures. The development of service agreements, measuring supply and demand in areas where access is limited, continuous training of scheduling staff, initiation of in-depth clinician profile reviews, and using automated templates have proven to provide veterans with timely access to care.



Wilmington (DE) VA Medical Center

Wilmington VAMC established new programs to assist veterans with mental health issues. These programs include a Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) group, dedicated to helping veterans deal with severely traumatic events; a Compensated Work Therapy program, offering assistance in learning new skills to join the job market; and an enhanced homeless program to support veterans in need of living arrangements.



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